

RED SONGBOOK

BIG RED SONGBOOK

flinch and

F

keep the red flag fly - ing here.

BIG RED SONGBOOK

Compiled by Mal Collins, Dave Harker
and Geoff White

The Big Red Songbook
This enlarged edition first published 1981 by Pluto Press Limited,
Unit 10 Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1 8LH

This collection first published 1977
by Pluto Press

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ISBN 0 86104 356 1

Designed by Pearce Marchbank

Printed in Great Britain by Mayhew McCrimmon Printers Ltd



Joe Hill was the most prolific of Wobbly songsters and their most famous martyr. Born Joel Hillström he migrated to America in 1901 from Sweden and joined the IWW in 1911 (see page 72). He spent the next three years as a migrant worker and IWW organiser. In 1914, Joe Hill was framed on a murder charge and sentenced to death. Despite a worldwide campaign to free him he was shot by firing squad on 19th November 1915.

On the eve of execution he wrote to Big Bill Haywood, the General Secretary of the IWW saying 'Don't waste time mourning, Organise.' Haywood replied 'Goodbye Joe. You will live in the hearts of the working class. Your songs will be sung wherever workers toil.'

The Preacher and the Slave was printed in the third edition of the IWW Songbook and sung to the hymn tune, 'Sweet Bye and Bye.' 'Here, if anywhere, was a clear breach with timidity, moralism and the whole manner and content of the standard American Culture.' Henry F May, *The End of American Innocence*.

Joe Hill

THE PREACHER AND THE SLAVE

Long haired preachers come out every night,
Try to tell you what's wrong and what's right;
But when asked how 'bout something to eat,
They will answer with voices so sweet;
Chorus;

You will eat, bye and bye,
In that glorious land above the sky.
Work and pray, live on hay,
You'll get pie in the sky when you die.

And the starvation army they play,
And they sing and they clap and they pray.
Till they get all your coin on the drum,
Then they tell you when you're on the bum;
Chorus;

If you fight hard for children and wife –
Try to get something good in this life.
You're a sinner and bad man, they tell,
When you die you will sure go to hell.
Chorus;

Workingmen of all countries unite,
Side by side we for freedom will fight;
When the world and its wealth we have gained,
To the grafters we'll sing this refrain;
Final Chorus;

You will eat, bye and bye;
When you've learned how to cook and to fry.
Chop some wood, 'twill do you good,
And you'll eat in the sweet bye and bye.

A Wobbly song. Sung first by US troops during the Spanish American War, the song was taken up by loggers in the North West and 'harvest stiffs'. Its authorship was unknown until 1926 when the veteran Wobbly Harry McClintock claimed it. (For the Wobblies, see page 72).

First published in the April 1908 issue of the *Industrial Union Bulletin*. A recorded version of the song can be found on *Songs of the Wobblies* LP by Joe Glazier and Bill Friedland, Labor Arts 3.

Harry McClintock

HALLELUJAH I'M A BUM

Oh, why don't you work
Like other men do?
How in hell can I work
When there's no work to do?
Chorus;

Hallelujah, I'm a bum!
Hallelujah, bum again!
Hallelujah, give us a handout
To revive us again.

Oh, why don't you save
All the money you earn?
If I did not eat
I'd have money to burn.
Chorus;

Oh, I like my boss –
He's a good friend of mine;
That's why I am starving
Out in the breadline.
Chorus;

I can't buy a job
For I ain't got the dough,
So I ride in a box-car
For I'm a hobo.
Chorus;

Whenever I get
All the money I earn
The boss will be broke
And to work he must turn.
Chorus;

THE PEELERS AND THE GOAT

Music: Traditional

Unaccompanied

Oh the Ban-sha peel-ers went one night on du-ty at the trown-ing-o, They
met a goat up- on the road and took him for a- stroll-ing- o, With
bay'-nets fixed, they sall-ied forth and comm-an-deered the whi- zzen-o, And
then they swore out migh-ty oaths and sent him off to pri-son-o.

'Oh mercy sir,' the goat replied,
'And let me tell me story - O
Sure I'm no rogue or ribon man,
Nor croppie Whig or Tory - O
I'm guilty not of any crime;
Of petty or high treason - O
And our tribe is wanted at this time;
For this is the ranting season - O'.

'It is in vain for to complain,
Or give your tongue such bridle - O
You're absent from your dwelling place,
Disorderly and idle - O
Your hoary locks will not prevail,
Nor your sublime oration - O
For Penal Laws will you transport
On your own information - O'.

'No Penal Laws did I transgress,
By deed or combination - O
I have no certain place of rest;
Nor home or habitation - O
But Bansha is my dwelling place,
Where I was born and bred - O
I descended from an honest race;
That's all the trade I've leaden - O'.

'I will chastise your insolence
And violent behaviour - O
Well bound to Cashell you'll be sent
Where you will gain no favour - O
The magistrates will all consent
To sign your condemnation - O
From there to Cork you will be sent
For speedy transportation - O'.

'This parish and this neighbourhood
Are peaceable and tranquil - O
There's no disturbance here, thank God,
And long may it continue - so.
I don't regard your author pin,
And sign for my committal - O
My jury will be gentlemen
And grant me my acquittal - O'.

'The consequence be what it will,
The peeler's power, I'll let you know,
I'll handcuff you at all events
And march you to the Bridewell - O
And sure, you rogue, you can't deny
Before the judge or jury - O
Intimidation with your horns,
And threatening me with fury - O'.

'I make no doubt that you are drunk,
With whiskey, rum or brandy - O
Or you wouldn't have such gallant spunk
To be so bald or manly - O
You readily would let me pass
If I had money handy - O
To treat you to a potcheen glass,
Oh 'tis then I'd be the dandy - O.'

HALLELUJAH I'M A BUM

Words and music: Harry McClintock

With humour

F Bb F Bb F Bb F
Why don't you work like o-ther men do? How in
Bb F C CHORUS
Hell can I work when there's no work to do? Hal- le-
C7 F F C7
lu- jah, I'm a bum, Hal- le- lu- jah, bum a- gain; Hal- le-
A7 Dm F Bb F C7 F 1 F Last
lu- jah give us a hand- out To re- vive us a- gain! a gain!

Oh, why don't you save
All the money you earn?
If I did not eat
I'd have money to burn.
Chorus;

Oh, I like my boss -
He's a good friend of mine;
That's why I am starving
Out in the breadline.
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